

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tables and figures	xi
Foreword.....	xiii
Acknowledgements.....	xiv
Note on the Treaties.....	xiv
About the authors.....	xv

I: THE FRAMEWORK

<i>Chapter 1. The Parliament in context</i>	2
From fig-leaf to co-legislature.....	3
A federal system in the making?.....	6
The style of Parliament	9
<i>Chapter 2. How it is elected</i>	12
Moving towards direct elections	12
Attempts to draw up a uniform electoral system	14
Key issues in drawing up the electoral system.....	16
– (i) The nature of the electoral system.....	16
– (ii) Conditions applying to candidates	20
– (iii) The right to vote.....	23
– (iv) Finance	24
– (v) The number of seats.....	25
The European elections so far.....	29
<i>Chapter 3. Where, when and in quale lingua</i>	31
The seat issue: where the Parliament meets.....	31
– Historical background	33
When: Parliament's cycle of activities	37
In quale lingua: languages within the European Parliament	38

II: THE ACTORS AND WORKING STRUCTURES

<i>Chapter 4. The individual members</i>	48
Background of the individual members elected in 2004.....	48
– Turnover and length of service	48
– Balance between men and women	49
– National parliamentary and ministerial experience	50

- Other political experience	53
- Other experience	54
- Post-MEP experience.....	54
The role of individual members within Parliament.....	55
The work of an individual MEP: choice of priorities.....	57
Rights and obligations of individual members.....	59
- Incompatibilities and verification of credentials	59
- Facilities, salaries and allowances.....	60
- Immunities	62
- Declaration of financial interests.....	64
The adoption of a members' statute	65
Members' assistants.....	67
<i>Chapter 5. The Political Groups</i>	70
Historical evolution.....	71
Composition of the Groups.....	76
- Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats (EPP-ED).....	76
- Group of the Party of European Socialists (PES).....	81
- Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE).....	83
- Union for a Europe of Nations (UEN)	86
- Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	88
- Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left ...	90
- Independence/Democracy Group (IND/DEM).....	93
- Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty (ITS) Group	95
- The non-attached members	96
Changing Groups	98
Support provided by Parliament to Political Groups.....	99
Political Group staffing.....	99
Structures of Groups	101
Working methods within the Groups	103
Own activities of the Groups	104
National party delegations.....	104
Group discipline and whipping	107
Power balances and relationships between the Groups.....	108
European party federations	110
<i>Chapter 6. Leadership structures</i>	114
The President.....	114
The Vice-Presidents	116
The Quaestors.....	118
The election of the President, Vice-Presidents and Quaestors	118
The Conference of Presidents, the Bureau and the College of Quaestors.....	123
The Conference of Committee Chairs and the Conference of Delegation Chairs	124
<i>Chapter 7. The Parliamentary committees</i>	126

The structure and character of committees	126
Membership of committees.....	128
Office-holders and their selection	129
Group coordinators	133
Staff of committees	133
Place, time and character of meetings.....	134
Committee business	135
– Draft reports and opinions.....	135
– Volume and distribution of reports	139
– Nomination of rapporteurs and draftsmen	139
– Choices facing a rapporteur	141
– The progress of reports through a committee.....	143
– Alternative and simplified procedures	145
– Treatment of confidential documents in committee	146
Subcommittees, temporary committees and other ad hoc structures	147
– Subcommittees	147
– Temporary committees	148
– Other ad hoc structures	149
Conclusion	150
 <i>Chapter 8. Interparliamentary delegations</i>	 156
Historical development	156
Number and composition of delegations	159
Leadership of the delegations.....	159
The role of delegations	160
Relations with the rest of the Parliament.....	161
Parliamentary Assemblies	162
– The ACP Joint Parliamentary Assembly	162
– The Euromed and Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assemblies	164
– Links with other interparliamentary bodies.....	165
Election observation and other ad hoc delegations	165
Overall assessment	166
 <i>Chapter 9. Plenary</i>	 167
The setting.....	167
The typical timetable of a part-session.....	169
“Open” Bureau and Conference of Presidents	171
How the plenary agenda is drawn up	171
Debates on breaches of human rights	172
– Extraordinary Debates	173
– Formal sittings.....	173
The allocation of speaking time in debates	173
Voting	174
Voting order	176
Building majorities: bargaining among Groups	178
Common procedural manoeuvres	179
Order in the chamber	180
Record of plenary sittings	182

Concluding Remarks	183
<i>Chapter 10. Intergroups</i>	<i>184</i>
The evolution of intergroups since 1979	184
The regulation of intergroups	186
Specific intergroups	188
– European Constitution Intergroup	188
– Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals	189
Concluding remarks	190
<i>Chapter 11. The Parliament secretariat.....</i>	<i>191</i>
Who are the staff of the Parliament?	192
The structure of the secretariat	195
Issues affecting the secretariat	199
The future of the secretariat	201

III: THE POWERS OF THE PARLIAMENT

<i>Chapter 12. The Parliament and legislation</i>	<i>204</i>
The consultation procedure	204
– Extension of the scope of the procedure	205
– Improving the quality of the procedure	206
– Giving teeth to the procedure: the Court ruling of 1980 and its repercussions	207
– Taking advantage of the Isoglucose ruling	207
– The limits of the Isoglucose ruling	208
– The 1975 conciliation procedure	209
– Consultation after Amsterdam and Nice	211
– Consultation under the Constitution	212
The cooperation procedure	213
The co-decision procedure	214
– The nature of the procedure	215
– Scope of the procedure under the existing treaties	218
– Scope of the procedure under the Constitution	220
– Organising the procedure	222
– The impact of the procedure	225
– Avoiding conciliation: first and second reading agreements	227
– The process of compromise	229
Assent procedure	230
– Consent and the Constitution	232
Parliament and the approval of international agreements	232
– Early advances	233
– The assent procedure introduced by the Single European Act	235
– Extending the assent procedure: Maastricht and thereafter	236

Right to initiate legislation	238
Resolutions seeking to initiate legislation.....	239
Developments arising from the new legislative procedures	240
– Determination of the legal base of proposals.....	240
– Reconsultation of Parliament	241
– Reinforced dialogue with the Council and Commission	241
Annual legislative programme	242
Pre- and post- legislative scrutiny	244
Overall assessment	245
<i>Chapter 13. The budgetary role.....</i>	248
The annual budgetary procedure.....	250
– Preparing for the preliminary draft budget	250
– Responding to the draft budget as adopted by the Council.....	252
– First reading of the draft budget in Parliament	253
– From first to second reading.....	255
– The option of rejection	256
– Implementation of the budget	258
Parliament's political priorities in the budgetary procedure	258
– Developing Non-Compulsory Expenditure	259
– Using the Maximum Rate of Increase	260
– Promoting policies through the budget	262
The budget and the Constitution	265
<i>Chapter 14. Appointment and dismissal.....</i>	266
Introduction	266
Development of the Parliament's formal powers as regards appointments	266
Parliament and the appointment of the Commission.....	267
Appointments to the European Central Bank	271
Appointments to the Court of Auditors	272
Appointment of the Ombudsman.....	273
European Parliament role in appointments to EU Agencies	274
Other appointments	276
No role regarding appointments to the Courts	277
The right of censure.....	279
<i>Chapter 15. Scrutiny and control of the executive</i>	281
General EP-Commission Relations: the Framework Agreement	282
Scrutiny through debates, questions and reports.....	283
– Debates on statements.....	283
– Parliamentary questions	284
– Reports.....	286
– Parliament studies and other research	287
– Scrutiny in committees.....	288
Control of expenditure and the discharge procedure.....	289

Scrutiny of executive decisions and implementing measures:	
the issue of "comitology"	293
– What is comitology?	293
– The 1987 comitology decision.....	294
– The Plumb-Delors procedure.....	295
– The "Modus Vivendi" of December 1994	296
– Sectoral comitology agreements	297
– The Council decision of 28 June 1999	297
– The "Lamfalussy Procedure"	299
– Operation of the 1999 decision	300
– The 2006 breakthrough	300
Committees of Inquiry	303
Judicial review.....	306
– The right to participate fully in legislative process	307
– Illegal failure to act	308
– Institutional autonomy	309
– Parliament and Court rulings on international agreements	309
– Annulment of parliamentary acts	310
– Challenges to acts of Parliament and the Council acting jointly	311
– Parliament and the application of Community law in the Member States.....	312
Overall assessment	312
Chapter 16. A political forum and a channel for communication	313
Parliament broadening the agenda.....	313
– Set-piece debates	313
– Resolutions adopted at the Parliament's own initiative.....	314
– Hearings	314
– Activities in the field of human rights	315
– Petitions	317
– Exhibitions	321
A network of contacts	321
– Contact channels to the other EU institutions.....	321
– Contacts with individual governments.....	324
– Contact channels to national parliaments.....	328
Openness, transparency and public awareness	331
– Visibility of proceedings.....	331
– Lobbyists and representatives of civil society	335
– The media.....	337
– Visitors.....	337
– Public awareness of the Parliament	340
Overall assessment	341
Chapter 17. Parliament and constitutional change	342
Draft Treaty on European Union and the Single European Act	343
From the Single European Act to Maastricht.....	345
From Maastricht to Amsterdam	347
Salade Niçoise	350

The Convention and the Constitution.....	352
Conclusion	355
IV: APPENDICES	
1. European Parliament elections	358
2. Contact details of Parliament Offices	366
3. Sources of information on the Parliament	371
INDEX	387

TABLES AND FIGURES

Tables Page

Table 1	Some main events in the Parliament's history	8
Table 2	Electoral system used for 2004 European elections	17
Table 3	Non-nationals elected to European Parliament	21
Table 4	Number of MEPs per country and ratio to population	26
Table 5	Turnout in European Parliament elections	28
Table 6	Time spent in plenary sittings	37
Table 7	Number of pages translated per language in 2006	40
Table 8	Women MEPs (as of January 2007)	50
Table 9	Previous parliamentary and governmental experience of MEPs	51
Table 10	Former Heads of State or Government elected to the European Parliament.....	53
Table 11	Gross annual salaries of MEPs by Member State.....	61
Table 12	Comparison of salaries and expenses of MPs (UK House of Commons) and MEPs	63
Table 13	Leaders of those Political Groups that have lasted more than two parliaments	101
Table 14	Group Coordinators (spokespersons).....	105
Table 15	Leaders of the UK Conservative and Labour MEPs	107
Table 16	Presidents of the Parliament.....	115
Table 17	The Vice-Presidents: 2007-2009 and their responsibilities	117
Table 18	The Quaestors: 2007-2009 term of office.....	118
Table 19	Presidential elections since 1979	120
Table 20	Number of reports adopted in plenary, listed by committee of origin, during the 1999-2004 legislature	138
Table 21	Committee chairs in the elected Parliament 1979–2007	151

Table	22	Parliamentary delegations, with number of members and chairs	158
Table	23	European Parliament Co-Presidents of ACP Assembly	163
Table	24	Indicative list of intergroups.....	186
Table	25	Secretaries-General of the European Parliament	195
Table	26	Legal bases covered by consultation under the existing treaties	211
Table	27	Consultation under the Constitution	212
Table	28	Legal bases covered by co-decision under the current treaties....	218
Table	29	New legal bases covered by "ordinary legislative procedure" (co-decision) under the Constitution	220
Table	30	Distribution of legislative procedures and voting methods in Council (EC Treaty)	246
Table	31	Budget Rapporteurs since 1994	251
Table	32	Commission preliminary draft budget for 2007	252
Table	33	Votes of confidence on incoming Commissions and incoming Commission Presidents	267
Table	34	Ombudsman Elections	274
Table	35	Motions of censure on the Commission	278
Table	36	Parliamentary questions tabled during the fifth legislature 1999-2004.....	285
Table	37	Sakharov Prize winners	318
Table	38	Former MEPs in the Commission	324
Table	39	MEPs appointed ministers in national governments	327
Table	40	List of specialist committees on European affairs in the parliaments of the Member States	332
Table	41	Visitors to Parliament (2006).....	338
Table	42	Number of MEPs envisaged under the Treaty of Nice.....	342
<i>Figures</i>			
Figure	1	Growth in number of Members of the European Parliament	10
Figure	2	The European Parliament Secretariat	196
Figure	3	The consultation procedure	205
Figure	4	The co-decision procedure	217
Figure	5	Assent procedure	231
Figure	6	The budget procedure	257
Figure	7	The new discharge procedure	292